Wiki Post #1  
October 15, 2011  
  
**Summary:** In India, the untouchables lived in mud-walled houses. Their soul purpose of life was to clean and look after the upper class society. This novel is written about a boy named Bakha, who is a sweeper in India. Bakha sleeps on nothing but dirt and blankets and wakes early in the morning to attend to and clean the latrines. Bakha always dreamed of being in the upper class, so he bought upper class clothing, trying to fit in as much as possible. Even through all of his dirty chores, he managed to keep himself and his clothes clean, and people recognized him for his great sense of fashion. However, after a long day's work, the outcast society was not allowed to drink from the same water well as the upper class. This rule made finding clean, drinkable water a bit of a chore for the sweeper society. Bakha was also busy with a variety of chores each day such as cleaning the latrines and sweeping the courtyard. Due to all of the duties of a sweeper, they were not allowed to attend school. However, since Bakha was striving to become a sahib, he wanted to learn how to read in order to study. He asked the Babu's son to teach him how to read, and after Babu Ji agreed, he could not wait to start his first lesson.

**Analysis:** When I first started reading this novel I was astonished at how poorly the upper class treats the lower class. I did not realize that the children, as well as the parents had distinguished roles in society. I also think it is absurd how the upperclass believes that the untouchables contaminate everything that they touch. However, I thought it was great how Babu Ji agreed to give Bakha reading lessons. I am anxious to see how teaching Bakha how to read will play out because I think it is frowned upon to help or teach the lower class. Although, I think it is interesting how the stereotypes of the social classes does not discourage Bakha from doing what he really wants to do. If I was Bakha, I would not be confident enough to go out on a limb and learn things that I was not allowed to learn. I would be so scared that I would get in major trouble.

**Application**: In India, each caste level has a different role in society, with the lower classes having the worst role. No one is allowed to stray from their caste because the different levels do not mix or intermingle with each other. The highest class lives the most luxurious life and the lower class just lives for the needs of the higher classes. Each class understands their own roles in society and does not question them. Each member was born into certain social classes and there is no way to change their social appearance. The members of the lower society try to seek perfection, even though it is really unattainable. They work very hard everyday just to do the best job they could possibly do, with the hope that the upper class will notice and offer them something nice. Overall, the lower classes are striving to become equal with the upper classes, in order to also experience the luxurious life. Unfortunately, no matter how hard they try, they will never be able to move up a level on the caste system.